

"Some people have the concept something has to be new to be good. They think old is ugly. Sometimes they will pay more for a antique reproduction than for an original antique," Shephard said.

"This house typifies the fact that 'old' can be beautiful."

Shepard and his wife, Sandy, are the parents of eight children, Sarah, 12; Dede, 8; C.J., 8; Danny, 8; Margaret, 7; David, 6; Jenny 4; and Lane, 3.

Shepard says his children enjoy living in an old home. With several unusual antique toys placed throughout the home, it's not hard to see why.

The hallway features antique dump trucks and cars. The study has a puppet placed on a high shelf, and rags dolls and other toys can be found in the children's rooms.

"It is a child-oriented home, and we meant it to be that way. A home needs to be fun to live in. I think there is still a big part of the child left in each one of us," Shepard said.

With 31 rooms, there is plenty of space for rambunctious children. There is a nursery, a study, a library, a butler's pantry, a formal dining room, a piano room, sewing and laundry room, living room, sitting room, and playroom, with several other rooms popping up in unexpected places.

"This is the mud room," Shephard said, tongue-in-cheek, standing aside to reveal a cloak room where boots, rain slickers and school bags are hung in neat rows. "This is where the children first come in, tracking the outside indoors!"

Some areas of the home have been opened up to create one large room instead of several small ones.

"I wanted that airy feeling instead of something closed in. Spotlights on the yard help bring nature inside. There are no curtains on many of the windows, to help achieve that effect."

Shepard said he has always been interested in restoring old homes. "I was reared in Washington, D.C., in an older home, and the surrounding houses were even older. I was also involved in carpentry at an early age."

Shepard, who is also vice-president of Town Square Travel, has a master's degree in art. He spent four years teaching at Brigham Young University.

According to an UPI report, officials involved in renovation projects nationwide say it is often more economical for a family to purchase and restore a decaying but structurally sound building than to buy or build a new home.

"There is a growing movement, not just among preservationists, but among average Americans on a budget," said Everett Ortner, president of "Back to the City," a New York based group whose aim is to renovate old buildings into useable housing. "People just can't afford to pay exorbitant prices for new homes."

"If you restore the home on its original site, that could be true," Shephard said. "Many older homes were built with such sturdy construction, they will last for many more years."

"However, to restore an antique home and furnish it completely can not be done cheaply. You do it because you love to."

